

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 576

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDON DERRY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK NI INT

SUBJECT: NI REACTION TO KILZRANDOM REPORT

SUMMARY:

KILBRANDON REPORT HAS ATTRACTED MODERATE ATTENTION IN NORTHERN

IRELAND, MOSTLY FOCUSED ON ITS RECOMMENDATION THAT NI'S REPRESENTATION

AT WESTMINSTER

BE INCREASED. PROTESTANTS HAVE WELCOMED REPORT,

WHILE CATHOLICS HAVE SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY IT. REPORT TENDS TO

CONFIRM A WIDESPREAD FEELING AMONG PROTESTANTS THAT HMG IS TREATING

THEM AS SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS BY REJECTING ON-MAN-ONE-VOTE FOR NI

AT WESTMINSTER. AT SAME TIME, REPORT'S CONTENTION THAT NORTHERN

IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES COULD HAVE BOTH DEVOLVED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

AND EQUAL WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION CHANGES AND CONFUSES DEBATE AMONG

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LOYALISTS WHO WANT TO REJECT DEVOLVED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WITH POWER-SHARING) IN FAVOR OF TOTAL INTEGRATION AND FULL WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION, AND UNIONISTS, WHO WANT DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT EVEN AT PRICE OF LESS THAN FULL WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION. END SUMMARY.

1. REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION ON CONSTITUTION (KILBRANDON REPORT) ATTRACTED MODERATE ATTENTION IN NORTHER IRELAND IN FIRST FEW DAYS AFTER ITS OCTOBER 31 PUBLICATION. THIS ATTENTION HAS FOCUSED ON GENERAL CONCEPT OF LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVOLUTION WITHIN UK

(REPORT'S RECOMMENDED SCOTTISH AND WELSH ASSEMBLIES WERE CHARACTERIZED

ON TTV AS SIMILAR TO THAT NOW BEING ORGANIZED IN NORTHER IRELAND) AND REPORT' RECOMMENDATION THAT NORTHER IRELAND'S REPRESENTATION AT WESTMINSTER BE INCREASED SO THAT IT IS PROPORTIONATE TO REST OF UK.

2. UNIONIST PARTY WELCOMED KILBRANDON REPORT. LEADER BRIAN FAULKNER SAID PROPOSALS WERE " A LOGICAL ADDITION TO THE CONSTITUTION ACT PROVISIONS FOR DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT HERE. WITH AN EXECUTIVE FORMED

AND FIVE ADDITIONAL M.P.'S AT WESTMINSTER, ULSTER WOULD BE FAIRLY REPRESENTED WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM. I TRUST THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL RECOGNIZE THE JUSTICE OF THESE PROPOSALS SO FAR AS NORTHERN IRELAND IS CONCERNED." UNIONIST CHIEF WHIP LORD BROOKEBOROUGH SAID ALL UNIONISTS " MOST HEARTILY ENDORCE" RECOMMENDATION

THAT NORTHERN IRELAND BE REPRESENTED BY 17M.P.'S AT WESTMINSTER. "IT IS INEXPLICABLE AND INDEFENSIBLE THAT A PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM SHOULD REMAIN SO GROSSLY UNDERREPRESENTED." BRLLKEBOROUGH POINTED OUT THAT BRITISH LABOR PARTY'S SHADOW SPOKESMAN ON WALES HAD CRITICIZED PROPOSALS TO REDUCE WELSH REPRESENTATION UPON INTRODUCTION OF DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT THERE. "YET THOSE WHO TAKE THIS APPROACH HAVE CONSPICUOUSLY FAILED TO RAISE THEIR VOICES AGAINST THE DISENFRANCHISEMENT OF ULSTER ELECTIONS WHEN THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED AGAINST AN INCREASE OF OUR PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION (IN THE NORTHER IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT). BOTH GOVERNMENT AND

OPPOSITION MUST PAY HEED TO THE RELEVANT PARAGRAPHS OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE CONSTITUTION. SUCH ACTION WOULD GO FAR TO SHOW THAT OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN REALLY DO HAVE UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION FOR THE PROBLEMS OF ULSTER AND ARE PREPARED TO TREAT OTHER AS THEY WOULD BE TREATED THEMSELVES."

3. OTHER NORTHER IRELAND SUPPORTERS OF INCREASED WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION WERE PREDICTABLY HEARTENED BY COMMISSION'S REPORT. DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY LEADER REV. IAN PAISLEY SAID THAT

RECOMMENDATION THAT NI'S REPRESENTATION SHOULD BE INCREASED, WHILE THAT OF WALES AND SCOTLAND SHOULD BE DECREASED, "SHOWS THAT UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM, NORTHER IRELAND HAS HAD A RAW DEAL IN TERMS

OF NUMERICAL STRENGTH AT WESTMINSTER." UNPLEDGED UNIONIST ASSEMBLYMAN AND WESTMINSTER H.10.1 JIM UILSEEDER SAID THAT INCREASED WESTMINSTER M.P.'S WOULD PERMIT A GREATER CROSS-SECTION OF NI OPINION TO BE REPRESENTED. ALLIANCE PARTY WESTMINSTER M.P. STRATTON MILLS, LONG A SUPPORTER OF INCREASE IN I M.P.S, SAID HE WOULD TABLE A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION ON THE SUBJECT.

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4. (UNIONIST) NEWS LETTER LEADER WELCOMED MORE M.P.S, ATTACKED REPORT'S CRITICISM OF OLD STORMONT FOR FAILING TO PROTECT MINORITY INTERESTS, AND CONCLUDED THAT "THERE IS, HOWEVER, COMPENSATION TO BE FOUND IN THAT THE NEW STRUCTURE PROPOSED FOR GOVERNMENT IN THIS PROVINCE WILL HAVE MUCH IN COMMON WITH THE SCHEME OF LEGISLATIVE DEVOLUTION ADVOCATED FOR SCOTLAND AND WALES. IF THERE IS PROVISION FOR MAJORITY DECISION (COMMENT: NEWS LETTER MEANS WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF THE NORTHER IRELAND SECRETARY) IN THE ULSTER EXECUTIVE,

CREATION OF PARALLEL SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM AS A WHOLE

OUGHT TO BE FOUND ACCEPTABLE. COUPLED WITH GREATER REPRESENTATION AT WESTMINSTER, ULSTER'S CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION SHOULD BE AS CLOSE TO FULL INTEGRATION AS MAKES NO DIFFERENCE."

5. NEWS LETTER ANALYSIS OF REPORT INDICATED THAT, BY STRESSING CERTAIN PAST BENEFITS OF NI HOME RULE AND HOPING THAT DEVOLUTION WOULD

REDUCE CITIZEN COMPLAINTS ABOUT REMOTENESS OF GOVERNMENT, REPORT "UNWITTINGLY" COUNTER ULSTER POLITICIANS WHO ADVOCATE "TOTAL INTEGRA-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TION OF NI WITHIN UK. AT SAME TIME, COMMISSION'S WARNING OF COSTS OF INDEPENDENCE FOR SCOTLAND AND WALES UNDERMINES ADVOCATES OF THIS COURSE

FOR ULSTER.

6. CATHOLICS REACTED VERY LITTLE, AND NEGATIVELY, TO REPORT. IRISH NEWS (PREOCCUPIED BY PROVOS' HELICOPTER ESCAPE FROM MOUNT JOY) DID NOT EVEN INFORM THEIR READERS THAT REPORT HAD BEEN ISSUED. SDLP LEADER GERRY FITT OPPOSED INCREASED WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION, CONTENDING THAT IT WOULD NEVER BE APPROVED BY BRITISH LABOUR PARTY, AND WOULD ONLY EXACERBATE SITUATION IN NORTHER IRELAND.

7. COMMENTS:

A. VIRTUALLY EVERY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIAN WHO SUPPORTS UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN ALSO SUPPORTS NORTHERN IRELAND REPRESENTATION AT WESTMINSTER PROPORTIONATE TO THAT ENJOYED BY ENGLISH VOTERS, AND MANY HAVE ARGUED THAT NORTHER IRELAND SHOULD BE OVERREPRESENTED, AS ARE SCOTLAND AND WALES, TO COMPENSATE FOR "REMOTENESS." NOW A ROYAL COMMISSION HAS SAID THAT NORTHERN IRELAND IS INDEED UNDERREPRESENTED.

B. LOYALIST OPPONENTS OF NORTHER IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT HAVE BEEN URGING A REJECTION OF ACT, AND "TOTAL INTEGRATION" WITH UK ALONG WITH INCREASED NI M.P.S AT WESTMINSTER. PRO-CONSTITUTION UNIONISTS, WHILE GENERALLY FAVORING INCREASED WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION, HAVE AR-

GUED THAT DEVOLUTION OF POWER TO AN EXECUTIVE AND ASSEMBLY REPRESENTS A

BASICALLY WORTH WHILE ALTERNATIVE. NOW KILBRANDON HAS CHANGED TERMS OF

THIS DEBATE BY INDICATING THAT NORTHER IRELAND, LIKE SCOTLAND AND WALES CAN HAVE BOTH DEVOLVED LOCAL POWER AND FAIR REPRESENTATION AT WESTMINSTER. EFFECT ON LOYALIST-UNIONIST DEBATE NOT YET CLEAR.

C. CATHOLIC OPPOSITION TO INTEGRATION AND MORE WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION IS NOT EXPLAINED PUBLICLY. SUCH MEASURES NOT INHERENTLY

INIMICAL TO CATHOLIC/REPUBLICAN RIGHTS WITHIN NORTHER IRELAND, OR
ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNCIL OF IRELAND AND FURTHER MOVES TOWARD IRISH
UNITY BY CONSENT. WE MUST SPECULATE THAT CATHOLICS OPPOSE THESE MOVES
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BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY MIGHT TEND TO ALLEVIATE THE PROTESTANT
SENSE OF GRIEVANCE AT WHAT PROTESTANTS PERCEIVE AS THEIR SECOND-CLASS
CITIZENSHIP, A FEELING ON WHICH CATHOLICS ARE COUNTING HEAVILY TO
INDUCE PROTESTANTS NI TO THE RUEPUBLICAN EMBRACE. SENSE OF GRIEVANCE
IS REAL, BUT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY LEAD PROTESTANTS TOWARD IRISH
REPUBLICANS.

D. IMPORTANCE OF KILBRANDON TO NI PUBLIC OPINION SHOULD NOT BE
OVERESTIMATED, IN COMPARISON WITH MORE IMMEDIATE ISSUES LIKE VIOLENCE,

POWER-SHARING, COUNCIL OF IRELAND, ETC. NONETHELESS, PIGEONHOLING
BY PRIME MINISTER AND OPPOSITION LEADER OF ON-MAN-ONE-VOTE FOR ULSTER
WILL HAVE BAD EFFECT ON PROTESTANT ATTITUDE TOWARD NI CONSTITUTION
ACT.
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